
Tennessee Teacher Licensure Standards Revision: School Counselors

The Background:

The Tennessee Department of Education has recently received calls from licensed school counselors who are enrolled in initial teaching licensure programs. Although few in number, there are some Tennessee school counselors who wish to become licensed classroom teachers.

The question has emerged as to whether or not licensed school counselors should be required to complete an induction experience (either an enhanced student teaching semester or a year-long internship) as part of the teacher preparation program. The question stemmed from school counselors' concern that, given their experiences in school settings, an induction experience may not be warranted. Furthermore, for school counselors to fulfill the requirement of an induction experience, it would necessitate the ending of their employment as school counselors.

In order to provide direction and clarification to teacher preparation programs, the Department of Education proposes that an induction experience not be required for licensed school counselors who are enrolled in teacher preparation programs and are candidates for initial teaching licenses.

The rationale for the proposal is based on the following three points:

- 1) As part of current preparation, School Counselor candidates must complete a full-time internship for at least one semester in school counseling which includes classroom instruction (see School Counselor Licensure Guideline 5);
- 2) The current School Counselor Licensure Standards and Guidelines include a guideline that requires School Counselor candidates who do not have teaching experience to participate in a semester-long orientation experience in school settings which includes classroom instruction (see School Counselor Licensure Guideline 7); and
- 3) Licensed School Counselors who complete an initial teacher preparation program must meet the standards of the Professional Education core through course work and field-based experiences.

It is proposed that, in combination, the three points of the above rationale more than adequately prepare licensed school counselors to enter the field as first year classroom teachers.

The attached revised School Counselor Licensure Standards and Guidelines include a new guideline regarding not requiring an induction experience for licensed school counselors who are candidates for initial teaching licenses.

The Recommendation:

Advisory Council on Teacher Education and Certification recommends approval of the attached revised Tennessee School Counselor Licensure Standards and Guidelines on first reading. The SBE staff concurs with this recommendation.

Tennessee Licensure Standards: School Counselor (Pre-K through 12)

Date Standards Adopted or Most Recent Revision: August 18, 2005

Date Institutions Must Submit To DOE: Current

Date Candidates Must Meet Standards: September 1, 2005

School counselors support teachers, other professional personnel, and parents in addressing the needs of students related to academic and career preparation and personal growth and development. The new emphasis on teaching for prevention calls for the school counselor to become a member of the instructional team, working closely with teachers. The counselor also works closely with school social workers, school psychologists, and family resource center staff in designing a team approach to meet student needs and overcome barriers to learning.

The school counselor provides instruction in small and large group settings, provides personal counseling and career guidance to individual students, and works with teachers to assist them in their role as advisors. The counselor also communicates with and provides education to parents. To assist counselors in responding effectively to the requirements of this role, institutions of higher education and local schools must collaborate in the design and implementation of school counselor preparation programs.

Prospective school counselors will complete studies in guidance and school counseling. The education and professional development of a school counselor is initiated in graduate level course work, refined in field experiences, and enhanced during professional practice. School counselor preparation programs will provide the prospective candidate with the knowledge and skills to develop the following:

1. Understanding of the nature and needs of students in grade levels PreK-12. Ability to apply knowledge from the area of human growth and development and learning theories; to identify learning problems; and to assist teachers and parents in responding to counseling and guidance interventions with students.
2. Understanding the process of social and cultural change with respect to various racial, gender, and ethnic groups, and knowledge of differing cultural and lifestyle patterns. Ability to develop plans and programs to prevent person and substance abuse, discrimination, and dropping out of school.

3. Understanding of the philosophical basis underlying the helping process. Ability to facilitate student growth and development through both counseling and consulting activities, including contributing to the development and implementation of individualized educational programs (IEPs) for students with special needs.
4. Ability to lead large and small group counseling and guidance activities related to personal and interpersonal growth, self-help and problem solving, and career development.
5. Understanding changes in society and technology and the influence of changes on work and learning. Ability to develop and implement a comprehensive career development program.
6. Ability to assist in curriculum advisement and career counseling using a variety of materials, strategies, and technologies.
7. Understanding of appropriate tests and other assessments to assist students and their parents in making effective educational, social, and career decisions. Ability to use group-administered educational and psychological measurement and appraisal instruments.
8. Ability to plan, manage, and evaluate a comprehensive PreK-12 program of guidance and counseling services. Understanding of research and research design. Ability to conduct research and evaluation projects related to the outcomes of counseling and guidance services.
9. Understanding of the ethical and legal standards of guidance and school counseling professionals.
10. Ability to work with teachers, school social workers, school psychologists, and family resource center staff in meeting student needs.
11. Ability to inform students, teachers, parents, and the community about the purposes and activities of the school guidance and counseling program.
12. Ability to work with parents and conduct parent education activities. Ability to use community resources and referral processes, and develop effective partnership arrangements with community agencies.

Guidelines

1. Candidates for licensure as a school counselor will complete an approved preparation program in school guidance and counseling and a graduate degree.
2. Candidates for licensure will acquire the knowledge and skills specified for school counselors. Candidates will be recommended for licensure by an institution with an approved program in guidance and counseling.
3. School counselor candidates will be prepared to serve schools with grades PreK-12. Preparation programs will have identifiable aspects of both PreK-6 and 7-12 grade levels.
4. Institutions of higher education with approved preparation programs for school counselors will work in collaboration with local school systems in the planning and delivery of preparation programs.
5. The school counselor internship will be organized jointly by the local school system and the institution of higher education. The internship will be on a full-time basis for at least a semester in length and or equivalent amount of time organized on a less than full time basis. Guidance and counseling experiences at both the PreK-6 and 7-12 grade levels will be provided to the candidate during the internship or practicum. The combined school settings selected will provide a diversity of students. Candidates will have an opportunity to demonstrate skills in individual and group counseling, teacher and parent consultation, classroom guidance, building cooperative relationships in the school, and development of partnerships with community resources.
6. Candidates participating in the internship will be advised and guided by a mentor counselor. Individuals serving as mentors will be selected jointly by the school system and the institution of higher education, and will indicate a willingness to serve as a mentor and to remain current in their field.
7. School counselor candidates without teaching experience will have a semester long orientation experience in a school as an early part of the preparation program. The orientation experience will be structured to provide observation, participation in, and analysis of classroom instruction. The orientation will also provide the candidate with teaching experiences and feedback regarding the candidate's teaching.
8. Institutions of higher education offering approved programs in guidance and school counseling will develop and submit to the State Department of Education for approval admissions procedures that include:

- a) Assessment of personal characteristics and academic proficiency of the candidate as required by NCATE for programs at the advanced level; and
 - b) An interview or review of the candidate's application by an admissions board comprised of one or more practicing school guidance counselors as well as one or more faculty from curriculum and instruction, educational administration, guidance and counseling or other appropriate faculties.
9. Programs in guidance and school counseling will be developed from the current knowledge base in guidance and counseling and in teaching and learning, will include faculty members guidance and counseling and other appropriate faculties, and will be approved by the State Board of Education in accordance with the Teacher Education Policy and Program Approval Procedures adopted by the State Board of Education. Preparation programs are encouraged to meet the standards of the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).
10. School counselors who serve in a supervisory role will not be required to have an endorsement in administration/supervision or as a beginning administrator; however, they are encouraged to attain comparable administrative preparation.
11. Candidates from Tennessee and from other states who are licensed and endorsed at the graduate level in school counseling in K-8 or 7-12 may be granted the PreK-12 license provided they have met one of the following conditions:
- a) The candidate has at least one year of documented successful counselor experience in the grade span not covered by the existing endorsement and has a positive recommendation by the school system or
 - b) The candidate has six hours of graduate course work in current content in school counseling in the grade span not covered by the existing endorsement. Candidates will submit evidence of completion of the six hours directly to the Department of Education, Office of Teacher Licensing.

If the candidate lacks (a) or (b), the candidate will be issued an Interim A license endorsed Pre-K-12, provided the superintendent indicates an intent to employ. The candidate must complete the required six hours before the Interim A may be renewed or before issuance of a regular license.

12. Candidates who have not yet completed the required internship may be employed under an Interim A License provided that the following conditions are met:
 - a) The counselor preparation institution in which they are enrolled certifies that the individual can complete the PreK-12 school counselor program within one year consistent with the institution's criteria;
 - b) The individual receives appropriate supervision by the institution during the internship; and
 - c) The superintendent certifies that the individual will receive direct supervision by a licensed school counselor (with a minimum of two years experience as a school counselor) for a minimum of one hour per week.
13. Candidates who hold a graduate degree in community/agency counseling may be employed under an Interim A license, provided the following conditions are met:
 - a) The individual is enrolled in an approved graduate program in school counseling;
 - b) The individual has completed at least 30 hours leading to completion of an approved graduate program in school counseling; and
 - c) The superintendent certifies that the individual will receive direct supervision by a licensed school counselor (with a minimum of two years as a school counselor) for a minimum of one hour per week.
14. Candidates who hold a graduate degree in community/agency counseling may be employed under an Interim E License, provided the conditions of the Interim E License are met and provided the superintendent certifies that the individual will receive direct supervision by a licensed school counselor (with a minimum of two years experience as a school counselor) for a minimum of one hour per week.
15. Candidates may seek an Interim E License based upon successful completion of the required specialty examination provided the candidate has completed a graduate degree and the superintendent certifies that the individual will receive direct supervision by a licensed school counselor (with a minimum of two years experience as a school counselor) for a minimum of one hour per week. If the candidate has not completed a school counselor program, the applicant must complete

course work appropriate to the applicant's needs in an approved school counselor licensure program not to exceed 24 semester hours.

16. **Licensed school counselors who are candidates for an initial teaching license are not required to have an additional induction experience (either an enhanced student teaching semester or a year-long internship).**
17. The revised standards become effective no later than September 1, 2005.